



STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

September 8, 2014

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: John C. Austin, President, State Board of Education

SUBJECT: Report on State Superintendent Search

Attached is the draft job description for the State Superintendent search process, based on the significant public and stakeholder input and State Board Member perspectives as discussed and developed at the SBE retreat and our recent meeting September 5, 2014.

The Roles and Responsibilities section describes the Constitution's expectations, and the consensus view of the State Board regarding the job and duties of the State Superintendent, and the desired relationship with the State Board of Education.

The Credentials, Skills, Traits, and Experience section reflects the priorities identified by State Board Members, drawing from their own perspectives, and those attributes consistently encouraged by public and stakeholder input. The categories are listed in priority order based on State Board member rankings; and within each category the order similarly reflects priorities based upon State Board member selecting and voting from among a wide range of potential attributes named and offered by the public and stakeholders.

This job description will now, with the assistance of a search firm, be elaborated into a full job description and package of materials to be widely disseminated to solicit high quality candidates.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • (517) 373-3324

Michigan State Board of Education State Superintendent of Michigan

Draft Job Description – September 9, 2014

Roles and Responsibilities

- “The State Board of Education shall appoint a superintendent of public instruction whose term of office shall be determined by the board. He shall be the chairman of the board without the right to vote, and shall be responsible for implementing its policies. He shall be the principal executive officer of a state department of Education which shall have powers and duties provided by law” (Michigan Constitution).
- The Superintendent reports to the State Board of Education, assists the Board in developing policy, and in fulfilling its constitutional obligations, and is responsible for the implementation of policies established by the Board.
- The Superintendent is responsible for the day-to-day management, supervision, and leadership of the Michigan Department of Education.
- The Superintendent assists the State Board of Education in developing an ongoing strategic plan for educational improvement in Michigan, and leads its implementation.
- The Superintendent is responsible for the facilitation of alliances, programs and partnerships, where appropriate, to further SBE policy and the strategic plan, and to support the continual improvement of public education in the state.
- The Superintendent is responsible for developing cooperative working relationships with other government departments, the executive office, the legislature, and constituent groups, in service of SBE policy and the strategic plan for improving education.
- The Superintendent is a spokesperson for the Michigan Department of Education and an advocate for the needs of education in the state.

Desirable Credentials, Skills, Traits, and Experience

1. High level of experience and effectiveness in managing significant education improvement and reform in K-12 systems; with particular emphasis on (in order of priority):
 - Experience as a school administrator and/or superintendent, education leader or manager at a level of significant scope and responsibility
 - Classroom/teaching/direct education experience
 - Working knowledge of state and federal policy

- Experience with turnaround and increasing student achievement
 - Knowledge of special education and a commitment to educating all children
 - Extraordinary command of the application of contemporary technologies to education
 - History of work with mixture of urban and rural populations
2. Personal traits; with emphasis on (in priority order):
- Integrity
 - Consensus and team builder
 - Collaborative approach
 - Critical thinker/thought leader
 - Visionary leadership
 - Appreciates teachers and educators
 - Strong communication skills
 - Sensitive to diverse and ethnic populations
 - Not opposed to labor
3. Has a vision and strategy for education improvement that can effectively improve learning and outcomes for all children, with emphasis on (in priority order):
- Views education holistically as preparation for life, work, citizenship and a lifetime of learning, critical thinking, and discovery
 - Believes all children can learn
 - Supports well-rounded education: arts, music, social and emotional supports, physical education
 - Committed to close achievement gaps and advance strategies that narrow historic inequities in learning and outcomes
 - Recognition of the effects of poverty
 - Vision combines reforms in education delivery to better help all students achieve and get good outcomes, with support for strategies and capacity-building that delivers on this goal
4. Demonstrated ability to lead policy change and educational improvement in a politically charged, multi-stakeholder environment with emphasis on (in priority order):
- Ability to work effectively with the governor, state legislature, grassroots community, and lobbyists
 - Ability to lead and engage multiple stakeholders/build coalitions
 - Politically astute

5. Effective manager with emphasis on (in priority order):
 - Strong education organization management skills and integrity
 - Experience managing a complex educational organization or large team to a high performance level
 - Commitment to research, evidence-based decisions
6. Interest and commitment to working closely and in alignment with elected state board of education with emphasis on (in priority order):
 - Willingness to work in a transparent, open way with the board
 - Commitment to support SBE's policy leadership in education and work with SBE to develop and advance policy, and lead its implementation
 - Willingness and ability to report to and support politically elected board
7. Committed to upholding and enhancing the vital role of public education in Michigan with:
 - A passion for public education
8. Understanding of Michigan's unique challenges with emphasis on (in priority order):
 - Michigan knowledge and relationships
 - Has a vision for addressing MI specific problems
9. Articulate spokesperson and ability to engage the public and constituencies